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THE CRISIS OF THE COLONIES CONSIDERED;

WITH SOME

OBSERVATIONS ON THE NECESSITY OF PROPERLY CONNECTING THEIR COMMERCIAL INTEREST WITH

GREAT BRITAIN AND AMERICA.

ADDRESSED TO THE

DUKE OF RICHMOND:

WITH A LETTER TO

LORD PENRHYN,

LATE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF PLANTERS AND WEST INDIA MERCHANTS.

[By J. Williams]

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TO HIS GRACE

THE

DUKE OF RICHMOND.

My Lord,

THE conſpicuous exertions you have made in favour of a more equal repreſentation, have long attached me to that and other political ſentiments you have adopted; and as they once breathed a ſpirit of true patriotiſm in regard to the Provincial Colonies, thoſe annexed to the Crown in the Weſt Indies, deſerving your utmoſt zeal and attention, will, I hope, receive both. Their ſituation is as delicate as their poſſeſſion is important; and, by addreſs, they may be made to contribute that commercial cement, wanted to fill up

the vacuum occaſioned by the loſs of our late American Colonies.

The Navigation-act, at the ſame time, might, by ſuch addreſs, recover the loſſes it cannot regain by immediate exertions of power. The name ſhould not be permitted to delude, when the principles have been fatally wounded. How to cure the diſaſter, is an arduous taſk; ſtill delicate attempts are demanded, and it would be unmanly to ſhrink back. With delicacy I have joined fortitude, in my opinions relative to the intereſting matter which I have addreſſed to your ſerious reflection; and I hope, and ſhall be happy to find, theory and practice are combined in my colonial notions, and propoſed arrangements.—The mite of my information is accompanied with a ſincere love for the welfare of my country; and as a pebble in the moſt important building is ſometimes admitted, to add ſtrength, if not beauty;

with

with that humble expectation, I offer my assistance; and have the honour to be, with very true and genuine respect and regard,

Your Grace's most obedient, &c.

THE AUTHOR.

TO

LORD PENRHYN,

Late Chairman of the Committee of Weſt India Planters and Merchants,

My Lord,

THE ſelection of your Lordſhip to the rank of chairman of the planters and merchants, is a mark of their eſteem and approbation, that carries a ſtrong teſtimony in favour of your zeal and integrity; and the union of theſe virtues is eſſentially required to render juſtice to them who chooſe, and confer honour on him delegated to act for the benefit of a body of reſpectable citizens. My approbation I am happy to give wherever popular exertions claim it; and therefore to the faithful diſcharge of your truſt, my cordial applauſe is heartily given.

I have devoted many ſerious hours to the benefit of the Colonies; and to promote it in any degree, would be one of the moſt coveted objects of my ambition. I have been impartial in my deſign, and though ſcrupulouſly attentive to

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the peculiar circumſtances of each diviſion of the colonies, ſuch as the Windward or Leeward Iſlands; ſtill the public good is the real and genuine end I have conſtantly had in view, and ſhall be happy to ſee general harmony promoted by a wiſe and well digeſted ſyſtem, framed to eſtabliſh the proſperity of the Colonies, and to make their connection with the Mother-country daily improve in ſtrength, as the intereſt of the whole becomes more beneficial and reciprocal.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient,

THE AUTHOR.

THE

THE CRISIS OF THE SUGAR COLONIES.

SECTION I.

WAR apparently has exhauſted its force; and as the flame, for want of fuel to keep it up, has ſubſided, the courts moſt adverſe to each other aſſume the counterfeited ſmile of contentment; at the ſame time it is notorious how active the French continue to be in repairing and augmenting their navy, which was left at the concluſion of the war in a condition but too flattering to the Ruling Houſe of Bourbon. On the one hand, the language of the French is high, and full of invectives againſt the re-

ſtoration of Grenada, and the other valuable iſlands that were captured during the war: on the other hand, the laſt Houſe of Commons voted, in terms of the ſevereſt cenſure, a condemnation of the peace. Such being the diſparity of ſentiments, which weigh in the boſom of each contending power, the inference to be drawn cannot be in favour of a long enjoyment of public tranquillity; on the contrary, ſuſpicions may be entertained, from an avowed rivalſhip and formidable French marine, that the preſent interval will be no more than an armed truce. The language of the enemy, made more vain and inſulting from the humbled condition of the Dutch, and the gratification of the Emperor, is a prelude to joſtling of intereſt, and aſſertion of extenſive power, aimed at by the court of Verſailles, in leading both the Emperor and Dutch, victims to the altar. Under ſuch deep deſigns, of dictating to Europe, the embers of war will be preſerved. Though bankruptcy has ariſen to ſhew the fallacy of graſping at too extenſive a do-

BRITISH MUSEUM

a dominion, yet the luſt of it will aſſuredly prevail.

The king of Pruſſia, at the ſun-ſet of his underſtanding, has ſacrificed, as his neighbours have done, at the ſhrine of the Bourbonian king; this melancholy truth is but too plainly to be ſeen in the command of the Dutch army, which has been given to a general appointed by the court of Verſailles. After a ſhort review of theſe occurrences, no man of common ſenſe can entertain a doubt of the loſs of the balance of power, which the wiſdom of nations once united to reſcue from the inſidious court in which it now preponderates; from which, in various ſhapes, every obſtruction will be made to prevent the Engliſh from re-eſtabliſhing their loſt dominion in the world of commerce. Hence the policy of the Miniſter ſhould be doubly on its guard, to elude the ſtratagems of the enemy, who are aſſuredly on the watch, and active in Ireland, and in every quarter of the Weſt Indies, to keep

England from reaſſuming the rank ſhe once poſſeſſed in the general opinion of philoſophers, for her wiſdom and ſuperiority of knowledge. In a ſituation ſo critical, experience is the guide, whoſe hand ſhould be moſt anxiouſly taken to recover thoſe beds of commerce that have been diſturbed, or totally loſt. To call back the old ſpirit, by which our colonies were cheriſhed and made flouriſhing, it is but juſt to take a ſhort view of the cauſes and effects compriſed in the hiſtory of the Engliſh and French colonies; this retroſpect will point out what ſhould be done to keep up our own, and prevent the rival iſlands from riſing on the ruins of thoſe, to whoſe proſperity England has been ſo much indebted for the increaſe and ſupport of her royal navy. To proceed, I think it but expedient, to prevent error from propagating, and to ſay a word relative to a reſpectable writer, who declares an opinion that the money now inveſted in the colonies, would turn out much better were it called in, and inveſted in clearing and

improving

impoving the lands of England. That fifty millions would have a moſt deciſive advantage in the cultivation of the lands of England, or any other country, is undoubtedly true; and were ſome parts of the kingdom to be deſerted, and the care now employed in ſuch devoted to the improvement of the wilds of Kent, the reſult would be beneficial to the proprietors of that waſte land; but what extent of power would this meaſure require? What injuſtice would it not realize in a ſtride ſo arbitrary? The injuſtice would be the ſame, were the fifty millions inveſted in the colonies to be arbitrarily removed, and employed, as the author, I allude to, would infer; however, it is far from being true that ſo much money has ever been lent by England for the advancement of the colonies. Their capital has gradually ariſen from induſtry, that languiſhed in England for want of employment, and that induſtry invited followers from all parts of the world, who have all aſſiſted to raiſe the ſtructure of the colonies.

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In the great work, England aſſuredly did give her arm; and materials were wiſely and liberally ſent out; but by whom? By the merchant. What was this merchant in the infant ſtate of the Sugar Iſlands? The anſwer carries ſome uſeful lights on the beneficial trade and culture of the Weſt Indies, and it is plainly this: The old merchant was not very rich, but generally allied to ſome enterpriſing planter, whoſe life was the pledge of his country's future benefit, and to whoſe induſtry and enterpriſe the merchant advanced his money; ſmoking his pipe at the Hambro' or Old Lloyd's coffee houſe, with the hopes of a lucrative trade, he encouraged the inſurer to offer a policy to the world, that every bale of goods exported from England, ſhould be ſafe from all the dangers moſt alarming to the monied man, or manufacturer. Thus in every ſtage of the earlieſt period, ſecurity was given to England to preſerve its property.

Africa, and every part of the British empire, contributed, as the parent country did, proportionably, to ſettle the old Sugar Iſlands. As their value was diſcovered, by a wiſe miniſtry, to haſten the buſineſs of navigation, and make the Engliſh ſuperior to that of the world, a bounty was given to increaſe the tonnage of merchant ſhips. Still no ſhip, or very few, ever quitted England full and returned empty. If ſhe lent, ſhe received returns; and if at preſent the capital is great that becomes inveſted in the iſlands, it is plain the money has accumulated and been well employed, at leaſt in the old colonies, to which it was ſent out progreſſively by the merchant, who was contented with a juſt return, and commiſſions that were moderate: if he could in the end of his traffic ſecure a comfortable retreat, his wiſhes were gratified. The planters too were happy with a moderate increaſe of their plantations. In the new iſlands the ſyſtem has been the reverſe, and the bad effects of extorted commiſſions, of

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the graſp and avarice of the Aſiatic idea, of ſacrificing all the art and powers of man to raiſe an immenſe fortune in a ſhort time, prove the folly and wickedneſs of a principle ſo fatal to a trading nation, that had originally blended profit with honour. In the foundation of the French government, the ingredients are the ſame from one end to the other of the whole political ſtructure; arbitrary will, and ignorance in idoliſing it, ſupport the great families, and depreſs all others. The French colonies formed a ſad ſpectacle of this truth. The land of Guadalupe, though rich, rendered little happineſs to the planters, while the bounties of Providence were counteracted by that narrow policy which oppreſſed the iſlands. Induſtry was not only fettered by prohibitions, but they went ſo far as to fix a bar between Martinico and Guadalupe. On refined ſugar the moſt cruel laws were impoſed, ſo detrimental to the manufacture of raw ſugar, that the whole general trade loſt all the advantages, ſo highly eſſential to keep

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the planters on their legs. Great and infamous as the reſtrictions were, yet it was almoſt abſurd to complain of their weight and folly. At laſt the Engliſh became both conquerors and deliverers of the French colonies, that had been ſo long enſlaved. The French court, in receiving back her colonies, found leſſons of wiſdom imparted by an enemy; and they were attended to during the laſt war, inſomuch that the iſlands were the leading objects of its care and protection: And ſince the peace, fortifications and other good deſigns have been carried on with unremitted vigour, particularly at Tobago and St. Lucia: and to improve on the old leſſons of the Engliſh, the French have done all in their power to cultivate trade, and make it as free from reſtraint as poſſible. To accompliſh the great object of commerce and navigation, free ports are declared at Martinico and Tobago. Theſe free ports are intended to draw all the ſources of wealth from the Britiſh iſlands, and prevent their emerging

from the diſtreſſes of a cruel and deſtructive war. In regard to Free-ports, I call the attention of miniſtry, and hope to ſee it attached to thoſe aſſiſtances ſo critically demanded to keep the Weſt India iſlands from falling into that decay, which may be apprehended from want of infuſion of freſh commerce, and alſo an increaſe of inhabitants, that is as eſſentially required. The very name of a free-port carries congeniality with the feelings of a nation boaſting of liberty. England once thought a free-port eſſential to the being of Jamaica itſelf; and the granting of that indulgence produced great advantages, without which, and the continued reſources from the Spaniſh main, that very important iſland would never have been brought to ſo ſplendid a figure, which is happily ſeen in the number of ſhips clearing outwards and inwards annually. Five hundred under one column, and nearly the ſame under the other at the Cuſtom Houſe, prove the value of that iſland. And as the means of cultivating it originally

originally are well known to have received no ſmall aſſiſtance from the cauſes I have mentioned, to promote the energy of its commerce, I am an advocate for continuing a free-port at Jamaica, made ſubſervient to the ſtaple objects of navigation; ſuch as ſugar, and the ſtaple manufactures of Great Britain. Articles of that deſcription ſhould not be ſuffered to be ſhipped in any bottom but ſuch as belongs to the mother country, according to the old wiſe navigation-act. While it is ſecured by a conſtant attention to the ſtaple produce and commerce, both of England and the Colonies, no detriment whatſoever can poſſibly ariſe to hurt it. A French officer, much engaged in the intereſt of America, in a public letter to the miniſter, deſired his definition of a free-port. The anſwer was given in terms perfectly liberal and juſt; but at the ſame time, it explained the nature of a free-port, in giving permiſſion to all nations to enter, and trade; yet it by no means goes ſo far as to preclude ſome

laws to regulate the clearing out and admitting ſhips of every nation, according to treaty in ſome reſpects, and ſelf-preſervation in others. A free-port is alſo a temporary indulgence, not to be continued a moment longer than the national intereſt of each country is promoted, and in which ports are the public property.

A port is ſtill free, when it admits ſhips of all nations, though on certain conditions allowed by government; ſuch as the tonnage of every ſhip, and ſuch reſtraints as I have already pointed out to preſerve the leading branches of native produce and home manufactures. But though ſuch reſtrictions are juſt to prevent jealouſy, yet it is hardly poſſible for foreigners to attempt to vie with our own merchants, who, by their connections, and great abundance of home manufactures, command the ſale of them in the markets of the colonies. No foreign ſhip, or very few, ever enter a Weſt India port, without a knowledge of its probable

wants;

wants; and to have ſuch relieved by even a foreign bottom, is only to receive freſh ſtamina in thoſe inſtances, which the parent country is unable to preſerve; but it muſt be conſidered that every foreign ſhip, on quitting the port, leaves ſo much money, not only for the accommodation of the planters, but conſumption of Engliſh goods, that would be long unſold were foreigners excluded the market. I am therefore convinced of the utility of the freedom of a Weſt India port; and Lord Sheffield muſt pardon me, when I tell him his opinions relative to commerce, are partial, full of error, and repugnant to the old eſtabliſhed principles, by which England was once able to form the great meridian of the commercial world. The ſhackles on commerce have been put on, in later periods by miniſters, who did not perfectly underſtand the nature of trade. This melancholy truth is conſpicuous in the long catalogue of prohibited goods. Inſtead of ſuch prohibitions, were moderate taxes affixed, the revenue would

would be increaſed; and ſuch a ſubſtitution of well-digeſted taxes in the place of prohibitions, would again admit Engliſh ingenuity into foreign markets, from which it is now excluded by repriſals.

SECTION

SECTION II.

GRENADA being the moſt Windward Iſland, and uniting the double advantages from her ſituation, to carry on a diffuſive trade in peace, and to defend her acquired wealth, ſhould a war break out, ſound policy demands a free-port in that iſland, and alſo a royal dock. Nature having been ſo partial in forming the Lagoon and Careenage, for a harbour at the mouth of a fine bay, defended by a creſcent of rocks; the inhabitants alſo having voted ſo liberal a ſum to carry on this bulwark, for the defence of the Engliſh navy, government cannot withhold its concurrence to complete ſo laudable an undertaking, not only for the defence of the Windward Iſlands, but annoyment of the enemy, who would cruſh the Engliſh in thoſe ſeas, were the natural advantages of Grenada to be neglected.

neglected. Grenada, from its vicinity to the Spaniſh main and Trinidada, would reap infinite benefit from a free-port; the ſpreading influence of which would fill the adjacent iſlands with Spaniſh money; and with its increaſe, population would ſpeedily follow. At preſent the iſland is not half populated, according to its extent and fertility. The eſtates are too large, and ſhould be divided; but without a freſh circulation of trade, and increaſe of people, the monopoly of eſtates will continue, and the ſums advanced by a few individuals will tend to perpetuate thoſe debts, which can only be paid by a ſubdiviſion of eſtates. Why was St. Kitt's ſo well cultivated and peopled, but becauſe the original ſettlers were limited to the number of acres each planter was allowed to poſſeſs?

On that vaſt country of the Caraccas and the Main, the Spaniards have expreſſed a ſtrong deſire to cultivate a commercial intercourſe with the Engliſh. On the other hand,

hand, the French, at Martinico and Guadalupe, are combining againſt the iſland of Dominica, and will by no means permit any advantage of a free port, to increaſe the trade of the iſland during a peace; and whenever a war breaks out, it cannot be long tenable but by the aſſiſtance of a navy that might find in the harbour of Grenada that protection from bad weather, to which the bays of Dominica, being quite open, would expoſe a fleet, and make it impoſſible to keep the ſeas. The Old Leeward Iſlands require aſſiſtance, and I am happy to point out a mode of giving it, which would by no means injure the public revenue.

The four and a half now paid and levied in each iſland, after the deductions, before the ſugar, for the payment of it, is exported, and before the ſales are perfected on its arrival in England, leave not one half that is paid by the planters, in the coffers of the public. Therefore let the four and a half ceaſe to be paid in the Weſt Indies, and one

half of the preſent ideal tax, be paid on the arrival of the ſugar, together with the preſent Engliſh duties. And to give general relief to the planters and ſugar merchants, I recommend to have ſugar bonded, as tobacco is bonded, in public warehouſes; or if the merchant on entering the ſugar on its arrival, would allow a douceur inſtead of giving his bond for future payments, ſuch an alternative would be productive of eaſe when wanted; and from the opulent merchant, immediate payment of the duties would be life to the revenue. The merchants have lately charged commiſſions on the payment of the duties, which thereby become more oppreſſive.

Some merchants too charge immenſe commiſſions, inſtead of the old two and a half per cent. which was invariably adhered to, until the ceded iſlands became objects of ſpeculation, widely differing from the old, moderate and juſt principles, which formed the ſtandard of colonial trade. The

policy

policy of England ſhould look to ſuch fatal changes, and frame ſalutary laws to prevent them for the future.

In regard to the refiners, to give them encouragement, is to add to the wealth of the colonies. And to accompliſh this double view, I would recommend a debenture on refined ſugar, that ſhould be granted to every exporter of it above a given quantity, and to fix an emporium of refined ſugar in the dominions of Great Britain. Sound policy points out the port of Harburgh, in the Hanoverian territories, as worthy the public attention, and ſituated to carry on a very diffuſive trade, now monopolized by the remaining Hanſe-town; which, though juſtly celebrated for its trade, yet is not ſo well ſituated in any reſpect, as the Engliſh port I am now recommending, to ſupplant both the Hollanders and Hamburghers. The ſugar-refining workmen are principally foreigners, to whom ſome particular attention ſhould be given at this juncture; when

new refining houſes will be ſet up in America. To prevent ſuch from diminiſhing that very valuable branch of Engliſh commerce, an aſylum ſhould be publickly erected to receive the refining manufacturer, ſhould he, by the infirmities of age, or accidents, be reduced and unable to ſupport himſelf; and, as a farther encouragement to the foreign refiner of ſugar, he ought to be declared by law a denizen after three years reſidence and employment in England.

SECTION

SECTION III.

WHEN the diſpute firſt broke out between America and the Engliſh miniſtry, I was the humble mover of a petition that was preſented to avert the evils that followed the rejection of it. I am now as ſanguine for an union of trade between England and America, through the medium of the Sugar Colonies. By their long uſage and dependence for lumber and horſes upon America, and the uncertainty and expence of getting either from any other part of the world, an intercourſe is highly eſſential; and it is fortunate for England that America, in her turn, has been as long and habitually dependent on the colonies for the vending her little horſes and lumber, which in Europe would be unable to find a market.

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The Engliſh colonies require a greater ſupply of the productions from America, than the extenſive and fertile iſlands of France ever can poſſibly demand. This is another argument for an union of trade. As nature has pointed it out, habit has confirmed it, and policy, as ſtrong as either, calls for the continuance. The intercourſe would be carried on in ſmall veſſels, as it always has been; and theſe little carriers would divert the attention of America from building large ſhips, which would be required to make more diſtant voyages, and for which a greater number of ſailors would be alſo expedient.

This conſideration is annexed to an intercourſe between the colonies and America, and pleads ſtrongly for the conſtant habits of trade and reciprocal benefits, by which all rancour and jealouſy would be removed, and permanent peace ſecured: and the ſtronger, as the violation of it would deprive the planters on the ſea-coaſt of their ſupport

port and livelihood; and the traders of their employment in the colony trade, upon which they might be made to depend, and become ſubſervient to the Sugar Iſlands, and to the parent country alſo, as the colonies would be a depôt for its manufactures and goods, that require, and cannot proſper long without the aſſiſtance of ſuch conſumers, as may be found in the colony-market, and there only.

Trading veſſels in America put her in no formidable ſtate when the war broke out. The ſame cauſes muſt produce the ſame effects. Theſe little veſſels are built for temporary purpoſes, and ſoon become unfit for ſea. They are worked with very few hands, and therefore cannot awaken any jealouſy in England. Let us reverſe this commercial ſyſtem, and, inſtead of it, let us ſay, No; with America no intercourſe ſhall be allowed. From this moment, at the ſide of the planter, you place a deathly arrow; he cannot be poſſeſſed of common ſenſe, but he muſt ſee in the map, how nearly he is placed to

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a formidable enemy, as capable to annoy as to befriend. If the planter be thus perplexed, and made of all mankind the moſt precarious in his ſituation; the merchant will feel the fatal effects; the manufacturer will daily find his orders diminiſh; and the ſinking tonnage of England ſhew the deathly pulſe of its trade and navigation.

Whilſt I plead for an union of trade already explained, I muſt purſue the ſame liberal principles a little farther, and declare myſelf a friend to Canada and Nova Scotia; and in order to promote the proſperity of each, I propoſe an exemption from colony-taxes, for every ſhip containing a certain number of horſes, cattle, proviſions, or quantity of lumber, imported into any of the Britiſh iſlands.

An intercourſe between the Britiſh Sugar Colonies and America has been a topic of diſputation in the political circles. Some aſſert the impolicy of ſuch on intercourſe; ſome

ſome the poſſibility of their doing well without any aſſiſtance from America; others have cenſured the planters for devoting ſo much land to the ſugar-cane, and not cultivating the growth of proviſions, as well as lumber. Theſe conſiderations go a great way to form the Criſis of the Sugar Iſlands. It is well known that the cane is of all plants that moſt adapted to the ſoil and climate of the Weſt Indies; and yet not one year in ſeven do the eſtates in ſugar make a good crop in either of the iſlands, yet the planters have followed the hand of nature and reaſon, in cultivating the plant moſt anſwerable to their care and expence: and both, for above a century, have been confined to the planting and manufacturing ſugar, encouraged by the parent country, as well as governed by the lights of experience. Fifteen thouſand pounds go but a little way in ſtocking an eſtate, and building of works. After a capital is once engaged in a plantation, it is quite impoſſible to convert it to any other

deſign. Moſt other conſiderations give way, and the planter has no choice. But, ſays the coffee-houſe politician, why not plant proviſions? Why not ſuffer the growth of timber to accompany the cultivation of the cane? The anſwer is this. In the moſt comprehenſive eſtate in the Weſt Indies, neither nature nor art has ever been able to raiſe ſuch a ſucceſſion of materials as are wanted, and implied in the term of lumber. At the ſame time, in the Weſt Indies, frequent droughts are fatal to vegetables; therefore the Sugar Colonies have from their infancy depended on America for lumber and proviſions. The intercourſe has laſted above a century. Beſides, the Weſt Indies are liable to ſuch ravages from ſtorms, that even Jamaica would have been lately a ſcene of horror, had not lumber and proviſions from America relieved the diſtreſs of the iſland. It is therefore plain that the Sugar Colonies, in different ſeaſons, and upon emergencies

peculiar

peculiar to the climate, cannot exiſt without America.

The vending of Rum of an inferior nature to America, has been a pillar upon which the planters have occaſionally reſted. Such rum it is in vain to ſend to Europe. Indeed the planters cannot afford to pay the freight and duty on it. Sound policy ſhould be full of eyes, and look to every object that can produce any advantage to a ſtate. But, ſay the Anti-Americans, your colony-trade muſt not be carried on in any degree to America, becauſe it is become independent. According to this doctrine, becauſe Ruſſia, or any other ſtate, is independent, England muſt ceaſe to take from ſuch quarters all thoſe materials for equipping her navy, which her own ſoil does not produce. The doctrine is both immoral and impolitic, and flies in the face of nature, having in different climates allotted peculiar benefits, to cement different nations, and bind them by a ſocial chain of conveniency and comfort.

Would any friend to England wiſh to ſee a bar fixed between America and the Sugar Colonies? If there be ſo miſtaken a man, his principles would infallibly hurt them, and conſequently the navy of England; and upon its ruins, raiſe that, together with the proſperity of the French colonies, that are ſtruggling to fix a prevailing intereſt in America. If America will ſend lumber, and other articles wanted in the colonies, in veſſels of limited tonnage, and be content to take your ſurpluſage of rum, and ſuch other articles of commerce, as might be enumerated in a treaty of mutual benefit, England ſhould loſe no time in adjuſting this ſyſtem, before the habits of repriſals become frequent and inveterate. French rum is very inferior to the Engliſh, for this plain reaſon, becauſe the brandy and wines of France, form the ſtaple of the European markets, and rum is totally excluded from them; but at preſent the American ſtates, to encourage the French colonies, admit their rum with a duty inferior to that

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affixed to the Engliſh. This privilege will certainly be attended with others, unleſs the care and wiſdom of the Engliſh legiſlature ſeaſonably prevent ſuch alarming confederacies to take place againſt the balance of our trade. The liberal bounties once given by the Engliſh to encourage the rice trade, turpentine, and other American productions, have ceaſed, and will be felt by the ſtates very materially. The rice imported ſince the war, has but paid the expence of its carriage and duties laid on it. America will be glad to repoſſeſs the market of England for ſuch and other branches of her commerce. In regard to tobacco, the bargain made with France is too pernicious to the planters to be long preſerved; mutual diſſatisfaction has ariſen; and though Mr. Alexander has been ſent out to inſpect the tobacco, and keep up the terms of the contract, yet he has by no means been able to pleaſe the Farmers-General of France. This is therefore a critical juncture to fix

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the vibrating ſtate of our own and the American trade.

India has had a competent ſhare of legiſlative regard and attention; Ireland has received ſingular inſtances of both. The colonies in the Weſt Indies now rap at the boſom of England for a ſhare of its wiſdom and protection.

SECTION IV.

TO give the commerce of Great Britain a new elaſtic ſpring, and at the ſame time to ſupport the landed intereſt under its preſſures, the reduction of intereſt is eſſentially required; and as uſury, under the ſanction of annuities, raiſed by bond and judgment, is ſo corroſive a ſerpent on the very vitals of the ſtate, its policy ſhould be directed to cruſh that efficient cauſe of general ruin. Uſury plunders the man in diſtreſs; robs the youth coming into the world; it dries up all the reſources required to nouriſh the roots of commerce. The intereſt of money being reduced in England, ſhould be alſo reduced in the Colonies, and fixed in each at the ſame ſtandard. If the intereſt of money was equitable, and adequate to the income of landed gentlemen before the late war, it now becomes juſt the reverſe; as

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ſo many new taxes have been laid, and the beſt eſtates are ſo conſiderably ſunk in their value. The monied men, during the ravages of the war, have been the only gainers by the calamity. The reduction of intereſt can be now comfortably borne by this opulent claſs of the people, who contribute leſs than any other to the payment of the taxes. The intereſt paid by the planters, particularly to the Dutch, is a burden too heavy to ſtagger under; augmented as it has been by the laſt taxes laid on, when the planters were tortured by the ſeverity of a war, which, during the whole operations of it, was conducted by the enemy to moleſt and ruin the Engliſh Sugar Colonies.

The importance of theſe depreſſed iſlands require but few arguments to ſhew it to the country gentlemen and others, who ſeem to have but little connection with them, and to depend not at all on their preſervation. The word Creole too is ſometimes made

made a term of reproach; but to ſilence all ſuch illiberal tongues for ever, let us reflect on the loſs of America; and if not the value, let the diſgrace of that diſmemberment, change terms of contempt for others of friendſhip and brotherly endearment to the remaining colonies. In one bold truth, the colonies were the cradles of your commerce and navigation, ſtill aſſiſting each in their maturity, as they nurtured both in their infancy. The country gentlemen ſhould remember the calculation of Sir Robert Walpole, which gave but a very ſhort liſt of gentlemen who could ſpend a thouſand a year. What has ſo abundantly increaſed it? The anſwer gives the honour to trade. At the cuſtom-houſe we ſhall be informed, that to ſhake the colony-trade, would diſplace the main pillar upon which that commercial building is ſupported; to the ſame cauſe England is indebted for the reſources required to ſupport the dignity of the ſtate, and to pay the intereſt of the public loans. The landed intereſt would be

unequal to theſe demands. Thus the general welfare of a trading country is ſo nearly interwoven, that to unravel a thread, ſeemingly ſmall, would endanger the whole fabric.

Let us now proceed to find out the exact condition of the planters, in order to fix their vibrating habits in favour of England. Education of their children in our ſchools, has been the tie by which the colonies have been ſo firmly bound to the mother country; but ſorry am I to obſerve, that the education of England is become ſo neglected, and ſo expenſive, that planters will be induced to ſend their children to America, unleſs ſome regulations be made relative to the Engliſh ſeminaries of learning. Where children are educated, they attach the endearment of a home; and ſhould the planters be induced to ſend their children to America for education, the colonies will be a precarious poſſeſſion to England.

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The beſt eſtates on the other ſide the Atlantic, are poſſeſſed by gentlemen who reſide and ſpend their income in England; but no inference ſhould be drawn from the opulence of ſuch, to oppreſs the reſident planters. They form the uſeful claſs of your coloniſts, and their condition is as much to be pitied, as the ſplendor of the Weſt Indians of opulence is apt to excite envy. The well-diſpoſed merchant, who is as happy to trade as he abhors to plunder, ſeldom appears in the Gazette in the liſt of the unfortunate. During the whole courſe of the war, few ſuch inſtances happened. This plainly ſhews the dangers of the trader to be not equal to the difficulties of the planters. Surrounded as they are by ſuch, it may be aſked, Why did they employ their capital in ſo precarious a manufacture as that of ſugar? The anſwer is this. In the infancy of the colonies, they held out temptations to men of enterprize; and America was then loſt in the obſcurity of woods. At that period the taxes were few,

and as a father began, a ſon was proud to complete, a new ſettlement. Succeſſors to property are urged on by pleaſing hopes of completing an hereditary eſtate, though ſmall, and incumbered with difficulties. By degrees the planter became the beſt friend to the Engliſh manufacturers, particularly of the iron trade. He became a friend to the cloth manufacturer, and in ſhort, to every branch of commerce, ſupporting, if not originally giving, the Engliſh nation the boaſted character of the Lords of the Ocean.

When the colonies were originally ſettled, ſome regulations were confirmed by law; ſuch as that by which the planters were forced to ſend their produce and manufacture to the Britiſh market only. Other regulations are legalized by cuſtom; ſuch as reſtraining all foreign ſugar from the markets belonging to the King of England: but the moſt valuable principles are unwritten, and conveyed in reciprocal rights, that bind

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the mother-country and colonies, knitting together the moſt diſtant parties of the whole empire of commerce.

In regard to the laſt taxes laid on ſugar, it has been ſaid, that they will be borne by the conſumer. This doctrine is not true; becauſe the taxes and expences on ſugar, are paid by the planter before a ſingle hogſhead comes to the market. He may be undone before the conſumer comes to his relief, unleſs the bonding of ſugar ſhould be permitted; and in that caſe the conſumer would undoubtedly come to the aid of the planter.

Ye landed gentlemen, remember the planter during the war ſaved you from a fifth ſhilling. Reflect that colonies are become objects of general competition. Let revolted America be a ſpur to your care of the loyal commercial colonies. Set a proper value on thoſe you poſſeſs, from the loſſes and diſgrace you have ſuſtained. Some ſpeculatiſts

latiſts contend for the uſe of honey inſtead of ſugar. This doctrine would derive ſome force from the ſuppoſition, that in the early ages, the bee and ſimplicity united, to confirm virtue and happineſs,

To ſimplicity I am a moſt zealous friend, but not to the romantic ideas of it, that would deſtroy learning, ſcience and commerce; all concurring to proclaim the Omnipotence of the Great God we adore. That there is a blot in commerce I allow, and ſee it with pain in the condition of the Negroes. Still I rejoice to find it much improved in the eſſential point contained in the liberty of Chriſtianity.

Baptiſm is openly tolerated by the amiable, benevolent Governor of Grenada: May his example be followed by others, and ſlavery, that is the greateſt curſe in this, no longer be ſuffered to carry its miſerable conſequences to the next world.

JOHN WILLIAMS.

Of J. DEBRETT, *Piccadilly*, may be had,

1. The Conſtitutional Guide.
2. The Proteſtant Barrier, &c.
3. A Collection of Letters addreſſed to the Greateſt Politician.
4. A Speech intended to be ſpoken on the Huſtings of Guild-Hall.